

June 19, 1987 Santa Rosa Island with E.K. Smith

MD: Okay EK, why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself, name, address and we'll start from there.

EKS: I'm Edward K. Smith and live in SB at 1830 Overlook Lane.

MD: Well the reason we're out here talking to you, I'm very interested in your personal history, your background, your family history and just how it is you came to be such a large part of SR Island. If you can, why don't you just go, start from the beginning, as best you can, and fill us in.

EKS: Well, I was born here in 1918.

MD: Were you born on the island?

EKS: On the island.

MD: You were?

EKS: But the thing is, my mother had a midwife, Maria Sierra, from the Sierra family and she, I guess, she wouldn't cut the cord here, so my dad took us into town, so the birth certificate reads born in SB County and it was done by Dr. Boseke (sp) at the Cottage Hospital.

MD: But you were physically born? . . .

EKS: I was physically born here but . . .

MD: . . But the cord was still attached to you. . .

EKS: Yes, so apparently they put down SB County.

MD: Do you know which building you were born in?

EKS: Yeah, the old house that burnt down, the original home of the supervisor, that was my dad.

MD: Where are you, how many children are there in the family, where are you in the lineup of . . .

EKS: I am the 2nd, my brother Charles Smith was first and I'm second, my sister Mary Frances Smith.

MD: Were either of them born on the island?

EKS: No, Charlie was born in Arizona just before. . . while my dad was on the island, he was born there, because he came from there.

MD: Do you know of anyone else that was born on the island in this century?

EKS: Yes, Billy Sierra. He's dead now, he died 2 or 3 years ago, but his son runs that Sierra's Hacienda on State Street, right in the 500 block.

MD: Is that a hotel or a . . . ?

EKS: It's a mexican restaurant and bar. And his father was born here. My mother was midwife to Maria Sierra.

MD: That's amazing I didn't realize that anybody was actually born on the island. Well how did your dad, let's go back to start with your Dad's generation, what was his involvement? How did he first start working here?

EKS: Well originally he was born in Syracuse NY, he left home when he was 12, 13 years old and went down the Ohio River and down the Mississippi and shipped out as a cabin boy. And he went around the world on the schooners. And when he first met the Vail's it was on Santa Catalina Island, he met Al's grandfather.

MD: What year was your dad born.

EKS: I don't know. I have photos of him in 1890 working for the Vail Company in Arizona, so he was probably older than my mother.

MD: If he work for the Vail Company in 1890, was that after Catalina?

EKS: After Catalina.

MD: So he had gone to Catalina Island pretty early?

EKS: Yes, he met Mr. Vail there and stayed there with him and then he took him to the Empire Ranch in Arizona.

MD: What was Mr. Vail doing on Catalina?

EKS: He had cattle, I believe.

MD: And you dad. . . ?

EKS: Worked there with him, started working there with him.

MD: As a sailor or as a cattleman?

EKS: As a cowboy, learning the trade, I believe.

MD: He switched professions?

EKS: So then he went there and I don't remember exactly when they brought him out here. They bought the island and let it rest a while and removed all the sheep and then they brought him over here because he knew how to run a boat, so he could run cargo and stuff here to the island, you know, whatever they needed.

MD: That was even before the Vaquero I was built.

EKS: Yeah.

MD: So your dad must have run a boat?

EKS: Oh yeah, he ran a boat.

MD: Do you know the name of it, what boat was run before the . .

EKS: The first one was a small one called the tortuga and then later on they got the Colleen, that was a 2-masted, looked like a, I think it was a ketch or something, then the 3rd one was the Onward, it was the largest of the 3 and that carried a lot more stuff.

MD: When did the Vaquero come in?

EKS: I don't know. Al could tell you the date of when he had that made.

MD: Well the first Vaquero, I think, was made in about 1913.

EKS: This Vaquero here, I don't remember the year. . .

MD: Late 50's, maybe 58', 59'?

EKS: Yeah, somewhere in there.

MD: What did your dad do on the island, when he came to this island, where did he live? Was he married?

EKS: Yes, he was married. He was married in Arizona. He married my mother, an old Apache girl.

MD: Oh, that's why Al calls you the indian?

EKS: Yeah, that's the one. So and he had a little ranch there, which later the Vails bought from his, I believe. I guess he was swinging a wide loop getting his stray calves in there and it was cheaper to keep him working. He came out here first and lives in the old house that burnt down and then he brought her over when Charlie was born, or a little before Charlie, after Charlie was born. He was foreman ever since, until 1945 when he retired.

MD: He came here shortly after 1902?

EKS: Well yeah shortly, I really don't know the year, you know he never talked very much. I'd ask him a question, I'd ask him about his family and he'd say "I came from New York", that was it.

MD: And you were born in 1918?

EKS: I was born in 1918.

MD: What was the age difference between you and your older brother?

EKS: Three years, 3 years between myself and my sister.

MD: So you mom came out here in about 1915?

EKS: Yeah.

MD: What do you remember about growing up out here. What are your very first, earliest memories about growing up on an island. What I'm interested in is, did you realize that you were growing up differently than other kids?

EKS: No I didn't. We seldom went to town so we didn't realize that.

MD: When did that strike you? Or did it ever?

EKS: It really didn't, it never bothered me. The first people, like I say, the Sierras, they lived in a little house that later burned down, they burned it down because it was ???????? dynamite in it - they lived in there, Juan Sierra, he had 4 kids. And then I don't remember the year they moved to town and then the Lopez family came here, there was 4 of them, and they lived here for quite a while and the rest of us when we had to go to high school, we moved into town. The Vails had a school here for us, which was, I can only say bigger than that room there.

MD: Where was the school?

EKS: Where Jesus lives, just above the ??????, it used to be a, they had a Delco plant there, for storage batteries, we could only use light so long and you'd have to turn them off or go down and start the Delco plant, to recharge the batteries, so it just extended that part of the building to make the school, he put 8 desks in there.

MD: Eight, were there 8 children going to school? Can you name them?

EKS: Yes, the Lopez family with Josephine, William, Isabelle and Ray Lopez. And then there was Hayden Hunt and his daughter Pamela went to school here, she was the smallest of the group. And then there was my brother Charlie, myself and Frances.

MD: Who was your teacher?

EKS: We had several. Every year we had a new teacher. In fact one year, I think one came back, but the Vail Company would bring them in.

MD: What time period are we talking about. When did you first, what year would that have been when you first. . I mean I guess from 1st grade?

EKS: About 1st grade. I remember the primers, the books. We'd just pass them on to the other. There used to be about 2 in every grade, as I recall. My brother and Josephine were about the same age, William and I were about the same age.

MD: Did you all use primers for your age level? I mean you were all in 1 room but you had different. . .?

EKS: Yeah, all had different books.

MD: And you got regular tests?

EKS: Oh yea, regular tests and everything.

MD: When was the 1st time you remember going to town?

EKS: Let's see. Around about the time of the earthquake in 1925.

MD: Was it before or after the earthquake?

EKS: It was after the earthquake, right after the earthquake, everything was torn down then.

MD: Did you feel it out here?

EKS: Yes, shook the whole place out. Scared the horses, I thought they were going through the fences at the barn for a while. We were all down at the ranch house when it happened.

MD: You must have been about 7 years old then.

EKS: About 7.

MD: What did you do when you first went to town? How did you get there and what did you do?

EKS: We went on the Onward and we went to stay with some people that lived on Haley Street that my mother knew . . . the Lopez family knew them and we went to stay with them. They were friends of my mother, she had met when she first came to town. In fact, Bermudez was their last name. And he had come out here before on the boat, he worked the boat. We stayed with them.

MD: Do you remember anything that was new about town? Did you have your first ice cream? Or did you. . .?

EKS: You know, I don't remember those things at all. Never paid much attention to them. I'm sure they took me to town prior to that but that was the time I remember. In fact my dad bought a house then, on Anacapa Street.

MD: When you were about 7?

EKS: Yeah, he bought a house there, he bought it from the Italians next door, Vizzolini - it was right between Craviotto's blacksmith shop. . . just next door to Craviotto's, in fact I sold the house to him later.

MD: There's a Vizzolini that's the under-sheriff of SB, is that any relation.

EKS: No, that's his grandfather.

MD: Then you came back out here and . . . ?

EKS: We lived here. We'd go to town about once every 6 months. My dad would go every month to move supplies in.

MD: What was your life like out here? What did you do? You would go to school during regular hours?

EKS: We had regular hours.

MD: And what did you do when you weren't in school.

EKS: Oh, play. . . ride the calves and mild calves and everything else, that was a big deal during recess, we'd go out and ride those calves too. Of course we'd get a whipping every time because we stir up the cows, you know they'd see and they'd come boiling off the hill down here. When my dad was around we wouldn't ride them. The old cow milking sheds were right there where Bill's house is. In fact that's what they were, milking pens. They had about 12 cows.

MD: Did you have your own horses too?

EKS: Yeah, they used to have some good tame horses that we rode all the time.

MD: Did you just ride anywhere on the island?

EKS: Oh year, we used to ride all over. We walked most of the time. We used to walk as far as Weed Canyon and over. We'd spend the whole day out.

MD: Did you ever catch snakes? Gopher snakes or . . . ?

EKS: No actually, I didn't snake until I was an adult.

MD: Really, what about skunks?

EKS: Skunks all the time, we used to trap them and kill them.

MD: Why did you kill them?

EKS: We were kids. Something stink'in and we got rid of it fast. At the time they. . . I think all the cowboys were Mexican, except for Lon Maynard, he was the oldest man, in fact he was older than my father and he used to milk all the cows. A real nice gentleman. Of course as kids we used to give them all trouble.

MD: Did you have regular ranch chores?

EKS: Not until later. Not until later. . . when they were short-handed, he'd come and get me out of school and my brother and we'd go out and ride. Those long rides would kill us. Come home and go to bed without eating. But we had chores around the house there. Helping Lon when he milked his cows, feeding the horses up at the barn.

MD: Well then you never developed into a SR Island cowboy in the same way. . .?

EKS: No my brother did. Because he didn't want to go to school. When it came time to go to high school, he said he didn't want to go, so my dad didn't push him, he stayed here all the time. He was never in town except to come in 5 days and come back.

MD: How many years did you go to school here?

EKS: Until I went to high school.

MD: So first grade to . . .?

EKS: To ninth, to ninth I guess.

MD: And then that's when you moved to town?

EKS: Yeah we finally moved in.

MD: Who lived in the house that your dad bought.

EKS: No one. The people next door would take care of it or some times the Lopez's would go into town and my dad would let them use it while they were in town.

MD: You just had a place to stay when you would go to town then?

EKS: So we had a place to stay.

MD: Is the house still standing? What's the address?

EKS: Oh yes. 630 Anacapa Street, next door to Craviotto's metal shop.

MD: When you went to town to live, was that the first time your mother went to town to live?

EKS: Yes, I really don't know whether she lived there anywhere, although she did say she stayed in town for a while when she came from Arizona until . . . then she was way down at the corner of Yanonali and Anacapa Streets. There was a little house there on the corner. I think there's a winery there now.

MD: She really then had to leave your dad to take you to town to live so you could go to high school.

EKS: Yeah, he'd come in once a month.

MD: Did you sister go to town at that time too?

EKS: Everyone did, the whole family. And that's schools ended here.

MD: That was the last year? What happened to the other kids that were still in school?

EKS: They all went to town. That was the last of the Lopez family, except for the older boy, William, he stayed here and worked as a cowboy, but all the others went to town.

MD: Were you in school the first year that they had school here?

EKS: Yes.

MD: Then school was here for 9 years?

EKS: Yes.

MD: What year did you graduate high school?

EKS: 36' from SB High School.

MD: Did you feel that your education was on a par with what the kids in town had been doing.

EKS: It was on a par, easy. We had good instructors, good teachers. The only thing is, I'd look out in that big class room and you know and get up to give an oral and those guys knew that I couldn't, there was too many out there looking at me, it was awful hard to talk, that was the only bad part about it. Otherwise the education was good.

MD: You were shy to get up in front of the class?



EKS: Real shy. I hated it. I'd look out there and those guys would sit there and grin at me and they'd fix me up good. The teacher understood, I told her. She said "keep on trying, forget them".

MD: In retrospect, do you ever think that that's because you grew up in an island atmosphere, you didn't have a lot of stimulus around you from . . .?

EKS: Yeah, it was that. I didn't know how to be around people. My sister was a little better. She went down in grammar school, she was 3 years below me, so she came up better than I did.

MD: Did you still come out here during the summers?

EKS: Yes every summer, every Christmas. In fact the big boat used to stop by and pick us up. My dad wouldn't go to town. We'd stand out on the end of the pier and wait for the Vaquero I. It would be about 1 or 2 in the morning, they'd pick us up and bring us out.

MD: I imagine that would be something you'd really look forward too.

EKS: Oh we did. To sit up in that big warehouse, they had a big observation platform there.

MD: Where was that?

EKS: At the end of the pier. It used to be a long warehouse. I don't know why they didn't rebuild the thing, but all the storage and stuff in it. It was real nice. The man that ran the service station and watchman of the pier, Pat Johnson, ran the service station, and he lived there. He was the caretaker of the pier.

MD: Now was this at Stearn's Wharf?

EKS: That was a long warehouse. A good 100 yards. He had an apartment up above and he one of these ladders that dropped down so you could go up into it. He'd pull it up at night.

MD: That's marvelous.

EKS: He used to tell stories about people running liquor. He says they knew he knew they were doing it and they'd leave him something there so he wouldn't say anything - hide it for him in this warehouse.

MD: There was a lot of rum running that was going on out here, at these islands.

EKS: Oh yeah. They used to bring it in here. Old Juan, one of the old Mexicans, found a load of it hidden, you know and he went down and came back drunk. Of course, saw the rest of the cowboys here and they took a wagon and went down and it used to come in big sacks, wrapped with straw.

MD: What did?

EKS: The bottles. They came in a round piece of straw, about that long, the bottle was stuck in there. Mostly brandy and champagne.

MD: When they brought the stuff back in the wagon, was this stuff that some rum runners had just cached out here?

EKS: Yeah they cached it out. Somewhere off the old ranch there. That's the only place you can get a wagon through and that's where it was when they came back.

MD: Must have been some pretty unhappy rum runners when they came back to find their liquor. . .

EKS: They had it in the barn quite a while and they used it.

MD: That's great, that's a great story. What did you do during your summers. Did you ride? Did you work?

EKS: Yes I rode.

MD: Were you ever Vail and Vickers employee?

EKS: Yes. During the summers when we were going to school here, Al and his brother and Margaret would come out. They were wild summers with those 3. We used to ride all over all the time. Most of the time we were out shooting pigs. In fact, he used to send us out to shoot pigs. And that got tiresome when he sends you. If you did it on your own, it's different.

MD: Were you allowed to bring friends out from town?

EKS: I never did. I never brought anyone from town. I never asked to. After a while, my kids have brought people out. But out of all my friends, I've brought 2 or 3 at the most is all.

MD: In all these years?

EKS: Yes. I was embarrassed to ask Al and you know. Cause we'd had it so good here and I just didn't want to wreck anything.

MD: Well then what did you do after high school?

W-110 7  
EKS: Well, my dad didn't want me to be a cowboy. He figured it wasn't the life for me, since my brother was, so between him and Russ Vail, they sent me to an aeronautical school in Glendale. A friend of Russ's and Ed's, Major C.C. Wooldy? ran it. He was a former pilot in WWI. It was Curtis Wright Tech, it's the old Glendale Airport. So I went through that and when I finished that, I was hired by Air Associates and I worked with them for a year and then Douglas offered me more money. I was working for 35 cents an hour and Douglas offered me 42.

MD: What year was that?

EKS: 39', late 38' I think. I didn't come here, I went straight to the school after I graduated.

MD: Did you go to Douglas?

EKS: So, I went to Douglas. Well actually it was Northrup then, Northrup Aviation. And that was down on Imperial, right at the old airport, right across the street from the airport. I worked for Northrup and then they sold out to Douglas in 39'.

MD: This is in LA? Where did you live when you went down there?

EKS: I still lived in Glendale, where school was, so I used to drive that every morning. And then later on I moved down to Hawthorne, cause it was closer. Four or 5 of us rented a home there. We were only a mile from work. The war in Europe had started and so things were getting pretty rough. Northrup was sold to Douglas and Douglas/Northrup moved over into Hawthorn and built a plant there. They wanted me to go but I said no I'm established here and know everyone here. Old man Northrup was a real nice person. He used to come around and talk to you in the shop. He wanted to know why I didn't want to go. I said, "well I'm stuck here and I know all these fellows I'm working with. . ." and he said "you can get a job lead man" and I says no. So I thanked him and I said I'd think it over. Shortly after that the draft came up and I got that little card that said 1A. Nineteen years old, you know. So I went to my supervisor and showed him and he said, "well I can't do anything about it". I said, "can't you get me a deferment for working in a defense plant". And we were just about getting tangled up in things and so I figured well, I don't want to be a soldier, I don't want to see someone stepping all over me later on. So I enlisted. So I went down and took the Navy and the Army Air Corps exams and I passed them both. So I waited to see who would call me first and it was the Army Air Corps. So when I came in to clear out, that was in 40', I came in to clear out, the supervisor says, "why didn't you tell me, we'd have got you off". It was too late now. I says, "I gave you warning 3 months ago". So he wanted me to go change my mind and I said I'm not changing now.

MD: Were they giving deferments to people who worked in defense plants?

EKS: Yeah. And I was one of the youngest lead men there. I was working experimental with Douglas. So they had a Navy captain there, he was an inspector and he wanted me bad cause I'd been working on Navy ships. And he offered me a chief petty officers rating on an aircraft carrier and I says too much water, that's not for me. And I was lucky probably, real lucky. So I went in and I graduated in the class of 43C and we were flying B25's to start with. And everything was going to Europe, you know. So our stuff wasn't ready and they weren't ready for us, so they sent us to different training stations here in the USA and the last one I ended up at was Camp McCall? North Carolina flying paratroopers around. And we thought, Oh God we got to fly those things, these old C47's. But then they broke up the unit, we had quite a few pilots, half of them went to Europe and half to the Pacific. I ended up in the Pacific, they sent us out to California to Hamilton Field, just above San Francisco, and we ferried planes to Hawaii. That's the first time I'd seen Hawaii and the last time. Japan bombed us when I was still a cadet, so they just stepped up things a little faster. So we ferried ships to Hawaii and back and ferried some more and then we returned from Hawaii and wasn't even needed. The next thing I know I got into my barracks, everything's packed, all my stuff. They put us on a truck down to the ocean, down to the waterfront there, and they put on an aircraft carrier. They B25's were up on top with the wings off, down underneath, they were just loaded with aircraft. We set out for Australia. It took 33 days to get there.

MD: Did you ever run into the Vaquero?

EKS: The Vaquero, as we went up the line, we went from Morsby all the way up, as the military took the air strips we'd move up and fight off of those. When I got to "Lile de beack", it's in a cove north of New Guinea, it's part of New Guinea. One morning we took off there on a mission and looked out and here's the old Vaquero in the harbor, painted green, that Army green.

MD: No. Does Al know this?

EKS: Yeah, I told him. So we left and when I came back she was still there so I asked if I could get out to it. A boatman took us out there and there was only one man that I remembered that was on the Vaquero here was still on it. I don't recall his name anymore.

MD: Was he a deck hand or someone that ran it?

EKS: He was a deck hand, he worked as a deck hand. On that same island of ?beack? I met a cowboy that worked here on the island. I'd been writing to him and we used to call him "boxcar Bill". I'd been writing to him all the time and he had a different APO number than I did, so I didn't realize he was on the same island. And he was in the 41st division. And so I was going to mail him a package and I walked out of the Army post office there and the

guy says, "why don't you take it to him?". I says, "I'd like to but I don't know where he is" and he says, "just take that old dirt road there, he's up a mile on perimeter".

MD: That is amazing.

EKS: And he's the only person that I met overseas that I knew, except for the guy on the boat. but I knew this man well.

MD: How long had he been cowboying here?

EKS: Oh, he was here several years. And I never knew he had left here until, well he left when I was in the military.

MD: Was he out here when you were in high school?

EKS: No he wasn't When I was in high school in town, he was out here, yes. I'd seen him here. But I went out in the perimeter there and went through the gate and he was, you know at that time they just took an air strip, they finally wised up and took the pieces of island instead of trying to take the whole island. They'd take the air strip and the perimeter around it and just starve the Japs out. And here he is in his tent with a rifle pointed out across an open field. And I walked in and this guy jumped to attention, the guy next to him, and Bill looks at me and I says, "Hey Boxcar!". And he looked and he got up and I said, "What are you doing?", he said I'm waiting for Japs to come out of the trees over there. They were baiting them. That's what they were doing. They'd lay out there and bait these guys that were hungry and then blow them away. So I talked to him for a while and he looked miserable. He had that jungle rot on his hand, just started. I said, "What is that?" and he said, "I don't know but it's getting worse and worse". And I looked at it and said, "hey that's that stuff they call jungle rot, I know they send them home for it". And he says, "no kidding", and I says, "yeah". We got to talking and he said there only 17% of his outfit left. He'd started at the bottom and worked there way all the way up through New Guinea there and he said it was miserable.

MD: Did you guys talk about Santa Rosa Island?

EKS: Oh yeah, we talked about it and everything else. So I told him, I said, "why don't you spread that stuff a little bit more and go down to the base hospital and I'll bet you get out". Sure enough, about a month, he came through there, his hands all wrapped up, he's going home.

MD: Must be some kind of a fungus, a fungal infection.

EKS: Yeah. And then I saw him about 3 years after I came home. Great big cattle rig parked up in front of the house, full of cattle. He comes up to the door, Boxcar Bill.

MD: Who was he hauling cattle for?

EKS: Some outfit, he was driving for some big outfit.

MD: Is he still around, do you know?

EKS: I don't know, I haven't seen him since about that time.

MD: Do you know what his last name was?

EKS: Al could tell you, I don't remember. But he was a real nice guy. He stopped by house to tell the folks I'm fine.

MD: Then after the war, did you go back to Santa Barbara?

EKS: Yeah, I came back here. I wanted to stay over there but I, they wanted me to enlist for another year, I wanted to stay in the service but I had to spend another year overseas and I'd already been there 3.

MD: What kind of news did you hear from home?

EKS: Oh, everything. They used to write to me all the time. The mail service was good. If it was any good, they'd usually break into it before you got it.

MD: Cookies from home.

EKS: Yeah cookies. A lot of guys used to ask for liquor but I think they had an easier deal getting it overseas. We used to get it black market out of Australia all the time. Because at least once a month the old man would send a plane down in Australia. Those guys would fill it with booze, cheese, milk and peanuts. The food was lousy that we had in our outfit and so we'd do that. Then they put me in tech supply and then I'd get around to these different depots and I started getting better provisions. I get these ?10 in 1? rations and we were eating junk. For an outfit that was flying and had a base to fly out of, the food was lousy. They kept these big cans, round cans, of SPAM. The grease would just pour out of it. There wasn't anything you could do to cook it right or anything, it just stunk.

MD: Sounds awful.

EKS: The bread was full of weevils, so we toasted it. Otherwise if you picked them out, you'd tear the whole bread up. While I was in the service, I only came over her once with Ed Vail. I came over on a PT boat or something. They brought me over to see my dad.

MD: Was your brother still on the island at that time?

EKS: No my brother was killed in 38'. I was in school, going to that tech school. It was the year after I got out of high school he was killed.

MD: He had left the island though?

EKS: No, they loaned him to the Jalama Ranch where Vail had cattle too.

MD: Oh, he was on Jalama?

EKS: Yeah, they loaned him up there to work some cattle and he was staying there.

MD: And what happened?

EKS: All I know is there was a young kid in the house with him and, anyway, my brother had his hat on and he was sitting at the table and that kid pointed a gun and hit him right in here and it came out right above the eye.

MD: It was definitely an accidental shooting.

EKS: Yeah, the kid was pointing the gun and fired.

MD: Was he a kid?

EKS: Yeah, my brother was a cowboy. The kid, he belonged to some family that lived there on the ranch. He was a young kid.

MD: What a tragic accident.

EKS: And he was 21.

MD: Your brother was 21?

EKS: Yeah, when he was killed. In fact, Al came to tell me. He and Russ picked me up and said that my brother was real ill and had been injured. They didn't tell me he was dead. In fact, we were getting pretty close to his house when he told me - I said "how bad", and he said, "well he died".

MD: How did your dad find out?

EKS: He was up there. My dad was up on the ranch. They didn't have any hospital in Lompoc then and they drove him all the way to SB, actually he died to death. Maybe he was lucky, otherwise he would have been a vegetable or something.

MD: Did your dad also work at the Jalama Ranch?

EKS: I don't know what he was doing there. I think he probably was, or something.

MD: What was his position here?

EKS: He was like Bill, he was the head of the island.

MD: He was like a manager.

EKS: Yeah, he managed it, only where Al does all the cutting and everything, my dad did the whole thing and they'd just come once in a while to see how things were going. So he was actually, they called him a superintendent then.

MD: Oh, I see, then he worked for Al's grandfather? Do you remember when the grandfather died?

EKS: No I don't.

MD: But after the grandfather died, then Ed took over?

EKS: Well, Ed and Russ and I guess ?Melan?, they took over. I don't even know what year they sold the Empire Ranch. The dates didn't make any difference to me then you know. I figured they'd have it in their records. Soon as I back from the service, I wanted to come out here and work but the old man said, "nope". I was home 3 weeks and he told me, "you better go out and get a job".

MD: You wanted to come back here to work? To be a cowboy?

EKS: Yeah, I wanted to come back here and work. He said you better look for a job and I said, "well I'm still getting severance pay from the Army", and I was getting good pay at that time. I hadn't had a leave or anything.

MD: For 3 years?

EKS: For 3 years. They paid me, I think they paid me \$1300.00 a month for 4 months.

MD: That was a lot.

EKS: That was a lot of money. In fact it was for longer than 3 years, because all the time in the service I never had a leave. They'd move you to one place and then they'd quarantine you. Every time they moved you to different base, you were quarantined. So then my dad came one day and said, "Hey", he says, "there's someone here to see you", and I walked out and there's a policeman standing at the door. It's old Bob Riggs. I met him years ago. When I went to town, he would see us walking to school and he'd pick me up and take me to school. Real nice guy. So he said, "Hey, they're giving exam, why don't you come and take it", and I said, "well I don't know if I want to be a cop". Well he says, "it's a job, jobs are hard to get right now". So I went and took it and I passed it.



MD: What year was this?

EKS: 1946. I had just gotten home. I got home in March. So the beginning of April I passed that. So I worked there until 1950 and the sheriff asked me. . .

MD: Who was the sheriff?

EKS: John D. Ross. His father just turned over the sheriff's department to him.

MD: His father had been the sheriff before him?

EKS: Oh yeah. His father was the sheriff for. . . first he was a police chief for 18 years and then he was the sheriff for I don't know how many years and then he turned it over to John D. Ross.

MD: How could he do that? Weren't they elected?

EKS: Oh, they didn't have any problems then, you know. They were good sheriff, he was an alcoholic, but he was good. At least he stuck up for you. So, I met him, my dad knew him, and he says, "why don't you come up and work for me." I said, "I don't want to take any exam", he says, "you don't have to take an exam, I'll appoint you as a deputy".

MD: So you had been working for the police department and Ross asked you to come and work at the Sheriff's Department?

EKS: Yeah. I was riding a motorcycle for the PD and I was having fun.

MD: And he said he'd just appoint you as a deputy?

EKS: Yes, he could do it then. You didn't have to take an exam.

MD: How different things are now. The sheriff today could never say son come on in and take my job.

EKS: It had its good and its bad points.

MD: So you accepted?

EKS: I accepted and the chief already knew it and he used to be a provost marshall in SB, he was chief then. He says, "you don't want to go up there son", he always called me that. A lot of guys hated him because he was military. To me it was good. You have to have a half way military outfit to run the police department well. No one likes discipline but it sure works. And he kept telling me, "no, no, don't go, don't go". So I went up anyway. He was a little disappointed but he was alright. When I was on the police department, I was the only one who ever gave old Tom Stork a ticket. Remember him?

MD: Sure.

EKS: I caught him speeding going down SB Street, he was going home about noon hour and he was passing everyone going down the street, he was really moving. And here I am, he goes by me and never slowed down. So pulled him over and it happened to be right in front of his house. So I said, "see your driver's license please", and he said, "do you know who I am?", I said, "yes, Tom Stork". He says, "I live there, so I'll go in the house and get it. He goes in and slams the door. So I waited and he didn't come out, so I rang and the maid came to the door and says, "well he taking his nap". I said, "alright, I'll see him down at the News Press office". So I went down and told the chief. The chief was Holzer then, Chief Holzer. And he says, "well Ed are you sure of this?". I said, "I'm positive, I went down and checked my speedometer and it was right on, he was doing over 40, going down the street and passing everyone". You know, after I stopped, the people clapped, they said, "good, good". Anyways, I says, "What will I do chief?". And he said, "Do what you think is right". "He made a monkey out of me and I'm going to go write him a citation when he comes into work". I saw his car, because the police department is down in a hole there at the old building at the city hall. I saw Stork drive into the parking lot, so I walked over there and asked to see him and they took me up to his office, he looks up and sees me there and I had already written the citation. I said, "would you mind signing the citation". He says, "I will not". And I said, "then I'm placing you under arrest". Oh boy, he flipped his lid. "You impudent young pup". Down he goes to the police department. Everybody looked. So the chief tried to talk to him and he says, "all this is is a promise to appear", and he refused to sign the ticket. He called his attorney and the attorney told him to sign it. He just refused. So the chief says, we'll give you an appearance day anyway. He told him he wouldn't lock him up for just a traffic citation. The old captain of the police told me to just lower the speed limit. "No", I says, "its right on, I'm not going to lower it". Later he told me, "you better look for another job". I said, no you fire me. His name was O'Brien, Jason . . . (tape ends here).

MD: Well what happened? Did he appear in court?

EKS: He fought it for 2 months. In fact I think Judge Gherini was sitting on the bench.

MD: Which Gherini?

EKS: Pierre.

MD: I didn't know he had been a judge.

EKS: He was a police judge. He had his little court room down in the hole there. Ask him sometime. I think he was on the bench. I think he tried to reason with Storke. I think Storke finally paid out a fine maybe, I don't think it was over \$10 or \$12.

MD: That's so rude of him to try to get out of it by getting out of his car, lying to you.

EKS: Yeah, and I wasn't going to give in. I was hard headed. And that's why I went to the chief. The chief didn't last long after that, Chief Holzer, he didn't last long after that. Then Noonan came in and I went to the sheriff's office. And I stayed there until 1978. I had 32 years in police work.

MD: You started then with the sheriffs in 1950?

EKS: Yeah. I wanted to stay longer but I had reached the age of 60, so I submitted a letter to the sheriff that I wanted to stay on, I couldn't. You see we were on the safety member retirement, so you had to leave at 60 unless you could prove you were healthy and capable. So I took an exam, came in with the papers, sent them to the sheriff but he never answered me. I sent it through channels, although he denies it. So he never answered me and I had to get out in April. So I retired.

MD: In 1978? Now during the time that you were sheriff, how often did you still come to SR.

EKS: Oh, I used to come out here as often as I could. Any time there was a boat trip coming or had time to come, I'd come out.

MD: When did your dad die? How long did he work out here?

EKS: He retired in 45' or just early 46', I don't remember. He retired just before I got home and I got home around the end of March in 46'.

MD: Did he retired because of his age?

EKS: Yeah, I guess his old legs were giving out on him. He had some bad falls here with the horses. I think he just got tired. But he missed it. Every morning he was at 5:00, he walk down to the breakwater, every day he was down there. He walk home, maybe go in the pool room, watch them play pool.

MD: Did he still come out here after he retired?

EKS: I don't think he did. My mother never came back.

MD: From high school?

EKS: After she left, she never came back.

MD: That seems strange to me.

EKS: She used to cook here for all the men. The first person I remember is ???????, they had a china man cook here. I remembered him. Used to wear a white cap, tall, slender man. I understand he was here several years and then he wanted to go visit his family in China and they didn't allow Chinese back in again and we never heard from him. We heard from him, but he couldn't get back. I have a photo at home that shows the old cook holding me.

MD: Your dad was here an awfully long time. Decades. Well then who took over when he retired?

EKS: When he retired, Al could tell you exactly, I think it was Abe Hunts. I don't know, Walter Lynch I think.

MD: Is Abe Hunts still alive?

EKS: No he passed away. He went back to Texas. His daughter is still alive. We get a Christmas card from her every year. She has 2 daughters somewhere here in California that she comes to visit.

MD: Who would be here when you would come out then?

EKS: Oh, I'd see Al. Well I knew all the foremen, like Hunt. Hayden came here as a kid. He came from Arizona too I guess. Quite a rum buster, wilder than hell. I remember when he was a kid and I was just a kid, he was just wild. He'd ride anything.

MD: Calves too?

EKS: Well, no he was riding those broncs. He climb on, no scare in him. But those are the only foremen that I knew. Well Diego, wait a minute, Diego took over after my dad, that's right. Hayden, Hunt and them were like straw bosses. But Diego took over after my dad moved into town.

MD: Is Diego the one that's working for Margaret now?

EKS: Yeah, he's a character.

MD: What's his last name?

EKS: Quevos. Actually the last name was Ramos, I guess the father's last name was Ramos and the mother's was Quevos and they used Quevos all the time.

MD: He was from Mexico?

EKS: Yes. He got a green card right after he got here. His brother, have you met him, Justino, he worked here as a foreman temporarily when Bill was gone.

MD: I met Munjaso.

EKS: Munjaso, Justino his real name. He's working in LA now, gardening.

MD: Oh, alright, then I did know him. I didn't realize he was Diego's brother.

EKS: Oh yes. He was good with horses, where Diego, he didn't care much for horses.

MD: Do you still ride when you come out here?

EKS: I used to, I don't any more, very seldom. I haven't ridden yet. My legs starts to burning. I had a horse fall with me at the Taylor ranch. I was going along a shale trail and slipped out. Well I got off, I got my leg out of the way alright, we went down about 30 feet down into a hole. Then he stood up, so I dropped my leg back down the side again, before I knew it he was down and caught me. So he thrashed around, you know how the animal does trying to get up, he thrashed around. It was some brushy country, and the guide was just across from me, 40 yards or so, and he couldn't help, couldn't get to me. We were after some steers, they were down in the brush, and by the time, I just laid off and the horse got up and then I just drug myself up. God, I thought he'd broke my leg. And I just did get back on again and I told him, "I'm going back". It hurt.

MD: When was this?

EKS: When? Remember when I hurt my leg?

Angie: It was about 1975.

EKS: No, no I wasn't working at the Sheriff's office was I?

Angie: Wait, you had just got out of the Sheriff's Department, about 79'.

MD: About when you retired?

EKS: Yeah, 79', right after I retired.

MD: What were you doing riding on the Taylor Ranch in Ventura?

EKS: Well I was helping them round some cattle up. George Begg, who I've known for years, he wanted some help and they always get people from the other ranches to help them. So he said, "do you want to ride?", and I said, "sure".

MD: Does Al do that out here?

EKS: No. So I got home, my whole leg is black, it hurt and burned, so I guess I tore all the blood vessels and the old doc looked at it and said, "boy, you've got a mess there". Then he said, "I got to drain it". I said, "oh, boy". So he gets this big needle, and I'm not kidding, the syringe was that big, big needle, the size of a pencil. And he stuck it into my leg and he started pulling it and little tiny blood clots were coming out and he said, "That's not doing anything". So he got his scalp out and he cut down like this and got at my leg and squeezed it, he got a big glob of blood, about the size of a cup. and he massaged my leg and he said, "we've got to do this.". So he had packs on it and everything else.

MD: Who was the doctor?

EKS: Dr. Paul Ashton. He's semi-retired now. He took care of that. So after that I'd ride 3 or 4 hours, my leg starts to tingle and gets real burning-like.

MD: How did you meet Angie?

EKS: In a bar. She was drunk.

Angie: I was not.

EKS: I was with George Bay. He was one of the only people I ever brought out here.

MD: He was from the Taylor Ranch?

EKS: Yeah, he ran the Taylor ranch for, Jordano and Miratti were running it at the time, J&M Ranch Company. So he and I were out together one night. In fact, we played golf with Al. And Al backed off and went home and George and I partied the rest of the night. That's the night we went into the Miramar and she was there with her brother-in-law and sister.

MD: In the Miramar Hotel?

EKS: In the cocktail lounge.

MD: And you were out of uniform?

EKS: Yeah, I was already, didn't work any more for the Sheriff's.

MD: What year was this?

EKS: I don't remember.

Angie: 1960.

EKS: Oh, that's right, I was still in uniform.

MD: She remembers the year.

EKS: I don't, I'm lucky I remember her birthday.

MD: You met in 1960 and were married 4 months later?

Angie: Yes.

EKS: Yeah, that was one of my hangouts then. George and I, we knew the bartender real well, Whitey Whitford, that's when Gausner had the hotel.

MD: Then when did you first bring your kids out?

EKS: Ed was 4 years old, brought him out on a boat.

MD: Was Al with you?

EKS: I don't remember. But I used to come out quite often.

MD: When was the first time you came out Angie?

ANG: We were out to dinner, at the Tee Off, and Al was sitting in the corner, Ed, Irene and my bother-in-law were at the Tee Off.

MD: Oh, Uncle Ed was alive then?

ANG: No, I'm talking about Al Vail. We were sitting there talking, they were leaving for the island the next day, and my brother-in-law worked for the fire department and he says, "Why don't you guys take the trip". I said, "I'm not going on any boat". I said, we'll take you down, my sister and I, because her husband had to go on duty anyway. So, next thing we knew Al grabbed my sister and I, threw us on the Vaquero, at 2:00 in the morning, it was my first trip over here. And it was rough, I mean it was ROUGH. I got over here and I took one look at this place and I says, "I came on a boat to look at this?". No impression whatsoever. I was just sitting down at the old bunk house with my head down like this and my sister doing the same thing. So he says, "Okay everybody get on the truck". My sister look and say, "what are we getting in the truck for". Pretty soon they starting getting some guns. We get in the truck and we start riding around and I mean we were scared. I'd never been on a road like this in all my life. I mean these roads are beautiful right now compared to what they were back in 1962. So anyway, he stopped to see this big, I mean the hogs were big then, they were quite larger than they are right now. All of a sudden they get out and my sister yells out, "what are you going to do?", he said, "I'm going to shoot that hog", she said, "what for?", he says, "I'm sure not going to throw a rock at it". That's Al Vail you know. And that was it, I can't stand to see an animal killed, I still can't to this day, I won't even go pig hunting with him. And then we had to turn around and come back and then I made a cross and said "never again", I said, "That's it, I will

never come back to this island, you can keep your island."

MD: You had been married for 2 years then?

ANGIE: A little over a year. Maybe just about a year. And I never came back to this island until Karen was about 5 years old. In fact, I didn't come over, Ed took the 2 kids, I said, "I refuse, I won't go over there". And so Al says, "you're going over there", I said, "I'm not going over there". And these guys were already here.

MD: So you had the kids, they were still small?

ANGIE: I mean he can handle them, he had no problem, he was real good with kids. And the next thing I know Al says, "I have a plane ready for you". I said, "What kind of airplane?". "Nice airplane", he says, "so just get out to the airport". So my sister drives me out there and I see this little thing out there. Before I get on the plane he reaches in his pocket and hands me a bullet and he says, "bite on it". I'd never been in a small plane in all my life. By the time I got here I thought I would have died. But he was quite a character. So then I started coming over a little at a time, 3 days and then a week.

MD: Did you have to talk her into it EK?

EKS: Oh, yeah. The kids liked it, you know.

ANGIE: Then it got to be 2 weeks and then I got addicted. I mean really addicted, so then we just started spending the whole summers over here. I'd stay about 5 weeks, go home and pay bills and then fly back again. Then I'd come back again and he'd stay here all the time. I'd just make 1 trip back to get more supplies and stuff like that. Now I think it's just about the greatest place in the world, it just took me a while to get used to it.

MD: Do you automatically now spend every summer here?

EKS: We try to.

ANGIE: We try to. If something comes up we can't do but we have been spending most of our summer here.

MD: With the kids?

ANGIE: Oh yes, all the time, they enjoy it. This is their life.

MD: Have you noticed any changes now that the Park Service bought the island?

EKS: No not really.

MD: Everything's pretty much the same?



EKS: Yes. We've never had much contact with them actually. Bill's the only one who's talked to them. I wasn't around then. I'd hear what was going on but I hadn't been over there yet. He asked me to go over there today to look at it.

MD: Would you like to drive over later when he goes over?

EKS: Oh we're going to drive over. He asked us to come by and then we're going to go over to Soledad shoot some pigs or something.

MD: Oh, you still hunt?

EKS: Oh, that I won't give up.

MD: And will you watch an animal get shot now Angie?

ANGIE: No, I just kind of put my head down. What I normally do, they don't like to take me, because if I see a sow with babies, I'll jump out of the Jeep before they do and I start throwing rocks at the pig.

MD: Does she really?

ANGIE: Yes I do.

EKS: I say, "what did you do that for". She says, "oh little ones are going to grow up to be big ones". That's what Al tells me too.

ANGIE: I used to tell my kids, "Would you like to see your mother shot, who would feed you and take care of you?".

MD: Do you ever bring back the meat.

EKS: No, It wouldn't be any good unless you put it in a pen and fatten them, then they have a good taste.

MD: So you just shoot them to shoot them.

EKS: Yes, look what they do to the country. They just tear it up. They've done that for years. Years ago they sent us out to shoot them, Al and I and Margaret. We'd spend all day out there.

MD: Intentionally killing the pigs to help the island?

EKS: Yes. They'd drop them every so many months and there's another litter, 7, 8 10.

MD: Must be a lot of ammunition that's been used on those.

EKS: Oh yeah, thousands of dollars.

MD: You don't use 22's I've noticed either?

EKS: I do.

MD: Oh, you do?

EKS: I do. Ed uses the big ones. I use a 22. I like to walk down the canyons. Sometimes I take ?Karen? with me. That way, you know 22's don't make as much noise and you don't scare so many pigs - those big ones - with a 22 you can get up on them.

MD: Do you use a magnum?

EKS: No, I use regular longs.

MD: How many pigs do you kill, like in a walk down the canyon, or how many pigs would you kill in a day?

EKS: Usually with Karen, let's see the last time I think we got 22 or something like that. Just walking. They used to drop us off up the top of water canyon and walk down and walk home.

MD: That's a lot of pigs. You could get 22?

EKS: Once I get ?Karen? going. She says, "Now don't get away from me - every time I ride with you there's a pig chasing us". It happens every time. Once I fired the last shell, I didn't know if there was any more, so I just waited to come a little closer and click and it came right at me. ?Karen? was yelling, I stuck the gun in his mouth and hauled him away and he went on running.

MD: Did Eddie like to shoot?

EKS: Oh yeah, he loves it.

ANGIE: He's a good shot.

EKS: Shoot and fish, he likes them both.

MD: You've been so fortunate to lead the life out here, to have the connection that you have.

ANGIE: I feel that's why we've never had any problem with our children. Never. We've always gone everywhere as a family, especially here, never had to worry.

EKS: Oh, we'd worry about them once in a while. Karen had her horse trainer here with her. I guess she told you about that.

MD: Well it's such a special place, I can see why you wouldn't particularly be interested in sharing with lots of other people.

EKS: I enjoyed all the old cowboys. I used to enjoy them, do everything with them. I saw a lot of them come and go, they were mostly Mexican boys. When I was a little kid I remember they had

2 great big oxen here. Jorge used to put me on them.

MD: What did they do with the ox?

EKS: I guess they were left here from the original outfit that had the island or something. I don't know where they came from.

MD: Do you think they were used to plow the fields? Where they a team?

EKS: They were a team.

MD: So you yoked them?

EKS: The yokes were there. I never saw them used. I don't know who used them. There was, I think, 3 mules.

MD: Is all that stuff still out here? The yokes and ?

EKS: No, I don't know - there used to be some hanging up in the barn there. I don't know whatever happened to it. Of course guys would come here and throw stuff away. Just like, they had a nice little cart, that's out there now, I noticed it's all rotting.

MD: Out in the dump?

EKS: Yeah. And that used to be in one of the barns and was in the best shape, nice shiny thing, looks like just a real nice little cart, now it's out there rotting, why they put it out there? That would have been something to keep for the museum or something.

MD: Well it probably could still be restored.

EKS: Oh, they could restore it but at that time it was varnished and everything, real nice shape, all the equipment there.

MD: In the years you've been coming out, does Russ ride or does he come out and. . ?

EKS: Russ used to ride a lot, when they first came out both of them had their saddles, in fact all 3 had saddles when they were kids, we've got pictures of them when they were small. Always riding. And then Russ little by little kept staying away, staying away, he was more of a city boy. He got to where he, I guess, he got in the Scouts and all that. I didn't see him as much.

MD: How often does Margaret come out now?

EKS: Every year, several times a year. She's had a couple of operations now, which held her back, but I understand she'll be here next month.

MD: It sounds like Mattie has spent as much, if not more time than. . .

EKS: Oh, she'd come here quite a bit. Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving. She loves the place like everybody else does. She's got a bigger family now, kids getting married.

MD: What do you know about this house that we're sitting in?

EKS: Well it's different than what it was. See this was, that was a bedroom there, you can see where they changed it to cut and this, they build this wall in, this used to be a long living room running this way.

MD: Oh, where the piano is, down to the kitchen, was . . .?

EKS: On, from here.

MD: Oh, I see.

EKS: From here to the bathroom was the living room, they had a big wood burning stove there and a couple of couches.

MD: Do you know who built this house?

EKS: I have no idea. It was here when the Vails bought it. Then Ed Vail put these french doors in there and this area here was open, this was closed over, they had a big wooden sink here where they washed things and then that partition there, that was just a small kitchen, then they added that other part on there with the refrigerator on it.

MD: Did Ed do most of the remodeling?

EKS: Yeah, Ed Vail, and my day kept his still in there going because they never used the kitchen.

MD: He kept his still going?

EKS: Oh yeah. They had a still there all the time. They had big old 5 gallon wicker covered bottles. That thing was always going.

MD: (laughter) Life on an island.

EKS: And the Coast Guard would always come in, with those old speed boats, and they'd pull in and that's were we got our candy, there was a chief petty officer and every time he'd come in, he'd bring us candy.

MD: Did they know about the still?

EKS: They never came up this far. They'd be down there. They'd go down there and visit, have lunch or something or sometime they'd go out and shoot.

MD: The Coast Guard did?

EKS: Yeah. My dad let them shoot there 30 odd 6's here. Yeah we'd always wait for that thing to pull up to the pier and the guy would walk up and bring us a bag of candy, it wasn't a big bag but it was candy.

MD: How nice, how thoughtful.

EKS: Yeah, he must have had kids or something.

MD: Well what a treat for your kids on an island. Did you look forward when you were younger to visitors coming out here?

EKS: Oh yeah, there was always boats going by. We'd see the "caps and yellows" quite a bit. In fact Angelo's father had that little small boat and Angelo would be on it. He was a little tiny kid, real windy like this, they'd be out there fishing, old Joe casting away.

MD: No wonder Danny C likes the ocean so much. Would they ever come in and drop off some fish for you?

EKS: Oh yeah, they'd give us fish. There was 2 old guys, they used to come here, Bill Gunner, my mom used to call him Dirty Neck Bill, I don't think he ever took a bath. He's have a sack of lobster and bring them up here. He'd go on trips to Alaska for salmon and he'd come down and he'd never forget, he'd bring some salmon here.

MD: I've noticed how much Laura, Bill Wallace's little daughter, now seems to enjoy it when company comes.

EKS: Oh yeah, well it's lonesome for a girl here. And I think it's going to be hard for them in school in town.

MD: Yeah, they've been here for how many years now?

EKS: Several years.

MD: Well it's a pretty impressionable age. I guess Meredith is pretty strict about giving lessons on a regular basis.

EKS: Yeah, still. I know I had fun here but I know how when I went to school later on, how hard it was, it was hard. I could do the work, easy.

MD: What do you mean it was hard? What was hard about it?

EKS: Oh, you know mixed with other people, so many in the classes, where here we just had the 8 and it was harder to express yourself.

MD: Of course there are only 2 kids here now getting lessons and there were 8 when you . . .

EKS: Yeah, it will be hard for them to study when they get back to school. Because my dad was always asking me, "how's your grades?", when he came in, when I was in town. I'd say, "fine".

MD: Was it hard for you to be around so many people and enjoying group activities. I mean that must have been something that you weren't accustomed to.

EKS: I wasn't, no, it was hard. Even when I was in high school. I played football and all that. That I could do easy, but mixed company was hard for me, real hard. In fact I never even learned to dance good as far as that goes. It was real hard to get into mixed company. A group of boys, playing ball, I was fine.

MD: When did you ask a girl out for the first time?

EKS: After high school. And then someone else got me to go, even at that. I didn't go out with very many. Actually I wasn't interested. Playing ball with the guys, that was more fun.

MD: Did you develop factions among the kids? Or where you all really good friends, or where you closer to some than others?

EKS: Oh, in school, yeah. I was closer to some than others.

MD: I mean on the island.

EKS: On the island? No.

MD: When there were just 8 of you.

EKS: Oh, we got along. We were always fighting or playing, either way. We didn't have any problems here.

MD: Your brother must have been your best friend.

EKS: Yeah, he was always out with the men most of the time. He didn't go to school. They'd take him more than they would me. If they really needed help, they'd get a hold of me. And then Bill decided he didn't want to go to school. So he stayed on here. I don't think he went to town to go to high school.

MD: What was Bill's last name?

EKS: Lopez. They came from Arizona too, from around Tucson.

MD: Are they still around, any of them?

EKS: Just one. One's in Indiana. By gosh, I understand that Isabelle is in town and so is Ray, the youngest one.

MD: In Santa Barbara?

EKS: In Santa Barbara. I've talked to Ray, in fact I went out to see him once I found out he was back. He lived way out on Cathedral Oaks Road but he's moved from there and I haven't seen him since. Then his sister called me once.

MD: Where is she, do you know?

EKS: She's in Santa Barbara and under a different name and I haven't seen her. I wanted to see her because there was some pictures that they got from us that I wanted to make copies of. I asked Ray once, that's why I wanted to see Ray. I says, "I know you've got some pictures I'd like to make some copies of". And I never did get an answer from him.

MD: Gee, that's too bad.

EKS: In fact, I haven't even seen her for years and years. The last time she married one of the deck hands that used to work on the old Vaquero, Bill Neeman. They used to call him needle-nose. He wanted to be a cowboy, so he got off the Vaquero and worked here. But he just couldn't get the knack to it. He married one of the Lopez girls, Isabelle.

MD: It's interesting that of the 8 of you that went to school here, you're really the only one that has contacted that still regularly comes out here. Well my sister comes. When was Frances here, 3 years ago?

ANGIE: 3 years ago.

MD: Where does she live?

EKS: Aptos. She retired from the service and her husband retired from the service.

MD: What do you do when you want to come out here, when you come out for the summer? Do you just give. . .?

EKS: I call Al. I always ask him, I don't crowd him. I say, "hey, do you have room for us", or something like that. He say, "well yeah". And he'll tell me what's on the schedule. Like he said, Margaret and her group will come out sometime in July, so we'll be off of there then. Well Margaret doesn't want us to go back to town. Margaret wants us to stay here. We go down to see her all the time.

MD: Where does she stay?

EKS: She lives in Palos Verdes.

MD: When she's out here, where does she stay?

EKS: Right here. She stays in one of these rooms. She used to like that room up in the corner, up on top. Since her hips been repaired she . . . apparently she stays in one of the lower rooms.

MD: Now your whole family stays upstairs I noticed.

EKS: Yeah.

MD: How long have you been doing that?

EKS: Ever since we started living here.

(Billy Horn enters and greetings are exchanged)

MD: Billy Horn, What's happening?

BILL: Oh, I was just sitting down there visiting while they're waiting for the fog to lift. Yeah, they're going to leave at 9:00, one way or the other, Al says.

MD: Oh, they are? I'd like to go down there before they leave and take some pictures. You're missing some great stories. Got some good island stuff going on here. Did you talk to your people or are you just going to plan on going out there at 10:00?

BILL: No I talked to them. They can't leave there until 10:30, so the planes won't be out of there until 11:15 probably and you have a choice. If you want to go to Santa Cruz earlier, you can go on the flight when it leaves here. Or if you'd rather stay here and go on over the top, you can do that and go back later this afternoon.

MD: Yeah, I think I'd prefer doing that.

BILL: Al righty. Well I guess I've got to put my uniform shirt on.

MD: Well you've got your green pants on. The Superintendent of the Channel Islands National Park has to set an example for his employees. Now when you stay in this house, you just use the upstairs?

EKS: We used to. . . we were downstairs earlier but Karen had a guest, that girl, so we just let them have it and Ed and I were down below here and she left yesterday so we went back up. That's easier for people to have the 2 rooms here and the bathroom and the same thing upstairs.

MD: When you come out now, do you usually fly or come on a boat?

EKS: She flies, I come on the boat.



MD: You always fly?

ANGIE: He made me come on the boat this year.

EKS: The kids weren't through in town and I says, "I'm taking the Jeep over, come on". So she did.

MD: Did you get seasick?

ANGIE: No, it was flat.

MD: Good.

ANGIE: And then the kids flew in Saturday morning.

MD: Now how did you start getting your own vehicle here? When did that habit start?

EKS: That idea came up. . well you know, when they're busy, in the summer time at the round up, you know they're using the trucks to go different places. And I didn't feel like asking Al to borrow the truck when they need. I said, "hey, do you mind if I bring a Jeep out here?", he says, "no, that's a good idea". So then I got the old Jeep. Course it's a little bit beat now, that salt water hasn't done it any good.

ANGIE: And the hole Karen went into last year. . . .

MD: What?

ANGIE: We were going down this little dead fence and Ed was pig hunting and Karen, well she's kind of a speed demon, and Karen says look out for holes mom, I'm driving, dad's in the back. . . there was a hole, I'd say it was about that big, the grass was growing. . . so Karen's going fast and we went in that hole and came right out of it, you know. I looked back and said, "Karen, we lost somebody back there".

MD: And you bounced right out of it?

EKS: Yeah

MD: Well, we should get down there if they're going to take off at 9:00.